

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 7287

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FOR SECRETARY, SISCO ATHERTON FROM SAUNDERS

WASHINGTON POSITION ON ANY ISSUE EXCEPT WHERE WASHINGTON POSITION
CLEAR AND PREVIOUSLY STATED, AS ON ISSUE OF OIL FIELD EQUIPMENT.

7. ONE EXCEPTION WHERE I INVOLVED MYSELF -- WITHOUT ANY IMPLICATION OF WASHINGTON BACKING -- WAS ISSUE OF CIVILIANS IN BUFFER ZONE. EGYPTIAN QUESTION TO ME WAS: SHOULD THEY RE-OPEN SUBJECT AFTER HAVING SAID FRIDAY THEY DID NOT WANT IT IN PROTOCOL. I SAID ONLY WAY TO ANSWER QUESTION WAS TO FIND OUT WHAT ISRAELIS REALLY WANTED. THEY ASKED ME TO TALK TO ISRAELIS SO THEY COULD PRESERVE FREE HAND IN DECIDING WHETHER TO RE-OPEN OR NOT. I SPOKE TO GAZIT OUTSIDE AS MAIN MEETING WENT ON AND, WITH SIILAS-VUO'S ENCOURAGEMENT, SAT WITH TWO SIDES IN REDUCING POSITION TO WRITING. WHEN ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN FORM OF WORKING PAPER ON POSITION TO BE INCLUDED IN CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT, I STEPPED ASIDE AND GAZIT AND MAGHDOUB BEGAIN TALKING TOGETHER.

8. ALTHOUGH I WANT TO AVOID SITTING IN JUDGMENT, I BELIEVE I SHOULD NOTE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE THAT SAME TWO ASPECTS OF ISRAELI PRACTICE WE HAVE NOTED IN SHUTTLES WERE PRESENT HERE -- LACK OF PERSPECTIVE AND PRIORITY IN SELECTING ISSUES FOR CONCENTRATED ATTENTION AND FAILURE TO GRASP OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD SOUND WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPTIANS. EGYPTIANS THEMSELVES MADE THESE POINTS AND IT WAS INTERESTING HOW OFTEN EGYPTIANS USED WORDS WE HEAR SO OFTEN FROM ISRAELIS: DO THEY REALLY WANT PEACE? HOW CAN YOU DO BUSINESS WITH THESE PEOPLE? EVEN MOST HAWKISH MEMBER OF EGYPTIAN DELEGATION COMMENTED YESTERDAY THAT HE FELT SORROW AND
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PITY FOR ISRAELIS BECAUSE OF THEIR "TRAGIC" INABILITY TO SEIZE OPPORTUNITY BEFORE THEM. MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD AND GOOD-HEARTED MEMBER EGYPTIAN TEAM LEFT DISILLUSIONED, SAYING HE HAD DONE EVERYTHING HE COULD TO MEET ISRAELIS HALFWAY BUT WITHOUT RESPONSE. EGYPTIAN FRUSTRATION WITH EIGHT HOURS OF ISRAELI BACKING FILLING -- WITH CONSTANT JERUSALEM INTERVENTION -- OVER INSIGNIFICANT ISSUES ON CIVILIANS IN BUFFER ZONE LED THEM TO COME TO ME AT 0300 THIS MORNING AND ASK ME TO TAKE THEIR POSITION WITH A BLANK CHECK, TALK WITH THE ISRAELIS, AND "PUT AN END TO THIS MISERY" AND TO ISRAELI INABILITY TO COME TO DECISION. (I EVENTUALLY MANEUVERED THEM BACK INTO NEGOTIATION WITH ISRAELIS.)

9. OTHER ASPECT OF ISRAELI NEGOTIATING STYLE -- WHICH SOME MEMBERS OF ISRAELI DELEGATION THEMSELVES SPOKE OF HARSHLY AT END -- WAS DIFFICULTY IN BRINGING DECISION TO A HEAD BECAUSE OF LARGE NUMBER OF EXPERTS INVOLVED IN JERUSALEM, ALL WITH A SAY.

10. ON EGYPTIAN SIDE, BAD CASE OF NERVES FROM ARAB CRITICISM CREATED UNDERLYING TENACITY ON NUMBER OF ISSUES WHERE THEY DID NOT WANT TO APPEAR IN ARAB WORLD TO BE COMPROMISE THEIR SOVEREIGNTY. THIS, AS I REPORTED EXTENSIVELY LATE LAST WEEK, GAVE RISE TO DIFFICULT APPROACH TO NEGOTIATION FOR COUPLE OF DAYS, BUT THEY STABILIZED AGAIN LAST TWO DAYS. DELEGATION ALSO PLAGUED AT TIMES BY FAILURE TO DO HOMEWORK BUT AT OTHER TIMES IS QUITE GOOD. KEY POINT FOR NEAR FUTURE IS THAT EGYPTIANS LEAVE HERE WITH SENSE THEY DID GOOD JOB IN FACT OF WHAT THEY SAW AS DISTRESSING ISRAELI APPROACH BUT WITH NO ELATION AND PERHAPS NOT MUCH SATISFACTION EXCEPT THAT THEY GOT JOB DONE IN CREDITABLE WAY.

11. TWO ISSUES TO FOLLOW CLOSELY, IT SEEMS TO ME, ARE:

A. HOW EGYPTIANS PREPARE FOR AND MANAGE MOVE OF CIVILIANS INTO BUFFER ZONE. DO THEY SEEM TO BE PRIMING PEOPLE TO GO BACK OR LETTING NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE?

B. KEEP AN EYE ON WHAT EQUIPMENT ISRAELIS INDEED DECIDE TO LEAVE IN OIL FIELDS.

12. WITH THIS, PRESENT CHAPTER OF GENEVA MILITARY WORKING GROUP CLOSES.

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13. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO CAIRO AND TEL AVIV.DALE

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